

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-7. (canceled)

8. (new) A sorting device, comprising:

two rows of sorting compartments, the two rows being disposed one above the other;

an extendable support mechanism configured to accommodate two containers one behind the other, the support mechanism being disposed below the two rows of sorting compartments, the support mechanism being extendable half-way to fill a front container of the two containers or a rear container of the two containers or both containers;

means for sorting mail items into the sorting compartments according to their destination address; and

a sorting and conveying device arranged such that the containers can be transferred from the support mechanism to the sorting and conveying device.

9. (new) The sorting device according to claim 8, wherein the sorting and conveying device runs as a conveying track parallel to the two rows of sorting compartments.

10.(new) The sorting device according to claim 8, wherein the support mechanism adjoin in its fully extended state at an approximately equal height as the storage and conveying device.

11.(new) The sorting device according to claim 8, wherein the support mechanism has a telescopic extending mechanism.

12.(new) The sorting device according to claim 8, wherein the support mechanism has a frame with swiveling rollers configured to support the containers, and the rollers are arranged such that the containers can be moved toward the storage and conveying device.

13.(new) The sorting device according to claim 12, wherein the rollers are disposed height-wise for inclining each container to a stop when at rest.

14.(new) The sorting device according to claim 13, wherein the rollers are disposed such that each container at rest, held against the stop, is inclined toward the storage and conveying device.

15. (new) The sorting device according to claim 14, wherein the last rollers in the inclining direction are mounted in a raised manner so that they act as a stop.

16. (new) The sorting device according to claim 8, wherein the support mechanism has a flat floor with a low coefficient of friction for accommodating and moving the containers on the support mechanism.

17. (new) A sorting device, comprising:

two rows of sorting compartments, the two rows being disposed one above the other;

an extendable support mechanism configured to accommodate two containers one behind the other, the support mechanism being disposed below the two rows of sorting compartments, the support mechanism being extendable half-way to fill a front container of the two containers or a rear container of the two containers or both containers;

a device for sorting mail items into the sorting compartments according to their destination address; and

a sorting and conveying device arranged such that the containers can be transferred from the support mechanism to the sorting and conveying device.

18. (new) The sorting device according to claim 17, wherein the sorting and conveying device runs as a conveying track parallel to the two rows of sorting compartments.

19. (new) The sorting device according to claim 17, wherein the support mechanism adjoin in its fully extended state at an approximately equal height as the storage and conveying device.

20. (new) The sorting device according to claim 17, wherein the support mechanism has a telescopic extending mechanism.

21. (new) The sorting device according to claim 17, wherein the support mechanism has a frame with swiveling rollers configured to support the containers, and the rollers are arranged such that the containers can be moved toward the storage and conveying device.

22. (new) The sorting device according to claim 21, wherein the rollers are disposed height-wise for inclining each container to a stop when at rest.

23. (new) The sorting device according to claim 22, wherein the rollers are disposed such that each container at rest, held against the stop, is inclined toward the storage and conveying device.

24. (new) The sorting device according to claim 23, wherein the last rollers in the inclining direction are mounted in a raised manner so that they act as a stop.

25. (new) The sorting device according to claim 17, wherein the support mechanism has a flat floor with a low coefficient of friction for accommodating and moving the containers on the support mechanism.